

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1176

To improve the provision of health care and services to veterans in Hawaii,
and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 7, 2005

Mr. AKAKA introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred
to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To improve the provision of health care and services to
veterans in Hawaii, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Neighbor Islands Vet-
5 erans Health Care Improvements Act of 2005”.

6 **SEC. 2. VET CENTER ENHANCEMENTS.**

7 (a) ADDITIONAL COUNSELORS FOR CERTAIN CLIN-
8 ICS.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall assign an
9 additional counselor to each vet center as follows:

1 (1) The vet center on the Island of Maui, Ha-
2 waii.

3 (2) The vet center in Hilo, Hawaii.

4 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW VET CENTER.—The
5 Secretary shall establish and operate a new vet center on
6 the Island of Oahu, Hawaii, at a location to be selected
7 by the Secretary.

8 (c) VET CENTER DEFINED.—In this section, the
9 term “vet center” means a center for the provision of re-
10 adjustment counseling and related mental health services
11 for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United
12 States Code.

13 **SEC. 3. HEALTH CARE CLINICS.**

14 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF CLINICS.—

15 (1) SATELLITE CLINICS.—The Secretary of
16 Veterans Affairs shall establish and operate a sat-
17 ellite health care clinic at a location selected by the
18 Secretary on each island as follows:

19 (A) The Island of Lanai, Hawaii.

20 (B) The Island of Molokai, Hawaii.

21 (2) MEDICAL CARE CLINIC.—The Secretary
22 may establish and operate a medical care clinic at a
23 location selected by the Secretary on the west side
24 of the Island of Kauai, Hawaii.

1 (b) ELEMENTS OF SATELLITE CLINICS.—Each sat-
2 ellite clinic established under subsection (a)(1) shall in-
3 clude—

4 (1) a vet center, which shall provide readjust-
5 ment counseling and related mental health services
6 for veterans under section 1712A of title 38, United
7 States Code; and

8 (2) a community based outpatient clinic
9 (CBOC), which shall provide to veterans—

10 (A) the medical services and other health-
11 care related services provided by community
12 based outpatient clinics operated by the Depart-
13 ment of Veterans Affairs; and

14 (B) such other care and services as the
15 Secretary considers appropriate.

16 (c) STAFFING AND OTHER RESOURCES.—

17 (1) SATELLITE CLINICS.—(A) The staff of the
18 satellite clinics established under subsection (a)(1)
19 shall be derived from staff of the vet center, and of
20 the community based outpatient clinic, on the Island
21 of Maui, Hawaii, who shall be assigned by the Sec-
22 retary to such satellite clinics under this section. In
23 making such assignments, the Secretary may not re-
24 duce the size of the staff of the vet center, or of the
25 community based outpatient clinic, on the Island of

1 Maui below its size as of the date of the enactment
2 of this Act.

3 (B) Each satellite clinic established under sub-
4 section (a)(1) shall have a computer system of na-
5 ture and quality equivalent to the computer systems
6 of the community based outpatient clinics operated
7 by the Department, including the capability to con-
8 duct medical tracking.

9 (C) Each satellite clinic established under sub-
10 section (a)(1) shall have appropriate telemedicine
11 equipment.

12 (2) MEDICAL CARE CLINIC.—The medical care
13 clinic established under subsection (a)(2) shall have
14 such staff as the Secretary considers appropriate for
15 its activities.

16 (d) HOURS OF OPERATION.—

17 (1) SATELLITE CLINICS.—Each satellite clinic
18 established under subsection (a)(1) shall have hours
19 of operation each week determined by the Secretary.
20 The number of hours so determined for a week shall
21 consist of a number of hours equivalent to not less
22 than three working days in such week.

23 (2) MEDICAL CARE CLINIC.—The medical care
24 clinic established under subsection (a)(2) shall have

1 such hours of operation as the Secretary considers
2 appropriate for its activities.

3 **SEC. 4. LONG-TERM CARE.**

4 (a) MEDICAL CARE FOSTER PROGRAM.—The Sec-
5 retary of Veterans Affairs shall establish and operate on
6 the Island of Oahu, Hawaii, a medical care foster pro-
7 gram. The program shall be established utilizing as a
8 model the Medical Care Foster Program at the Center Ar-
9 kansas Veterans Health Care System of the Department
10 of Veterans Affairs.

11 (b) ADDITIONAL CLINICAL STAFF FOR NON-INSTI-
12 TUTIONAL LONG-TERM CARE.—

13 (1) ASSIGNMENT OF STAFF.—The Secretary
14 shall assign to the community based outpatient clin-
15 ics (CBOCs) of the Department of Veterans Affairs
16 referred to in paragraph (2) such additional clinical
17 staff as the Secretary considers appropriate in order
18 to ensure that such clinics provide non-institutional
19 long-term care for veterans in accordance with the
20 provisions of subtitle A of title I of the Veterans Mil-
21 lennium Health Care and Benefits Act (Public Law
22 106–117) and the amendments made by such provi-
23 sions. Such additional clinical staff shall include a
24 home health nurse.

1 (2) COVERED COMMUNITY BASED OUTPATIENT
2 CLINICS.—The community based outpatient clinics
3 referred to in this paragraph are the community
4 based outpatient clinics as follows:

5 (A) The community based outpatient clinic
6 in Hilo, Hawaii.

7 (B) The community based outpatient clinic
8 on the Island of Kauai, Hawaii.

9 (C) The community based outpatient clinic
10 in Kona, Hawaii.

11 (D) The community based outpatient clinic
12 on the Island of Maui, Hawaii.

13 **SEC. 5. MENTAL HEALTH CARE.**

14 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH CEN-
15 TER.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish
16 and operate in Hilo, Hawaii, at an appropriate location
17 selected by the Secretary, a new center for the provision
18 of mental health care and services to veterans.

19 (b) CARE AND TREATMENT AVAILABLE THROUGH
20 CENTER.—The mental health center established under
21 subsection (a) shall provide the following:

22 (1) Day mental health care and treatment.

23 (2) Outpatient mental health care and treat-
24 ment.

1 (3) Such other mental health care and treat-
2 ment as the Secretary considers appropriate.

3 (c) STAFF.—The mental health center established
4 under subsection (a) shall have as its staff a drug abuse
5 counselor, a nurse practitioner, and such other staff as
6 the Secretary considers appropriate for its activities.

7 **SEC. 6. STUDY ON ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED CARE AND FEE-**
8 **BASIS CARE.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
10 shall carry out a study of the demand for, and access to,
11 specialized care and fee-basis care from the Department
12 of Veterans Affairs for veterans on the neighbor islands
13 of Hawaii, including whether or not the specialized care
14 or fee-basis care, as the case may be, available to veterans
15 from the Department on the neighbor islands is adequate
16 to meet the demands of veterans for such care.

17 (b) REPORT.—Not later than six months after the
18 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall sub-
19 mit to the Committees on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate
20 and the House of Representatives a report on the study
21 required by subsection (a). The report shall set forth the
22 results of the study and include such recommendations for
23 legislative or administrative action as the Secretary con-
24 siders appropriate in light of the study.

1 **SEC. 7. CONSTRUCTION OF MENTAL HEALTH CENTER AT**
2 **TRIPLER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER, HAWAII.**

3 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITY
4 PROJECT.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs may carry
5 out a major medical facility project for the construction
6 of a mental health center at Tripler Army Medical Center,
7 Hawaii, in the amount of \$10,000,000.

8 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be
10 appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for
11 fiscal year 2006 for the Construction, Major
12 Projects, account, \$10,000,000 for the project au-
13 thorized by subsection (a).

14 (2) LIMITATION.—The project authorized by
15 subsection (a) may only be carried out using—

16 (A) funds appropriated for fiscal year 2006
17 pursuant to the authorization of appropriations
18 in paragraph (1);

19 (B) funds appropriated for Construction,
20 Major Projects, for a fiscal year before fiscal
21 year 2006 that remain available for obligation;
22 and

23 (C) funds appropriated for Construction,
24 Major Projects, for fiscal year 2006 for a cat-
25 egory of activity not specific to a project.

1 (c) FACILITIES.—The facilities at the mental health
 2 center authorized to be constructed by subsection (a) shall
 3 include residential rehabilitation beds for patients with
 4 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and such other
 5 facilities as the Secretary considers appropriate.

6 **SEC. 8. FUNDING.**

7 (a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
 8 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Veterans
 9 Affairs for fiscal year 2006 such sums as may be nec-
 10 essary to carry out sections 2 through 6.

11 (b) AVAILABILITY.—Amounts appropriated pursuant
 12 to the authorization of appropriations in subsection (a)
 13 shall be available only to carry out sections 2 through 6.

14 (c) CONSTRUCTION WITH OTHER FUNDING FOR
 15 HEALTH CARE FOR VETERANS IN HAWAII.—It is the
 16 sense of Congress that the amount authorized to be appro-
 17 priated by subsection (a) for fiscal year 2006 should—

18 (1) supplement amounts authorized to be ap-
 19 propriated to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for
 20 that fiscal year for health care for veterans in Ha-
 21 waii for activities other than those specified in sec-
 22 tions 2 through 6; and

23 (2) not result in any reduction in the amount
 24 that would have been appropriated to the Secretary
 25 of Veterans Affairs for that fiscal year for health

1 care for veterans in Hawaii for such activities had
2 the amount in subsection (a) not been authorized to
3 be appropriated.

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